

## CHAPTER 5

### INFINITIVE, GERUND, AND PARTICIPLE

#### General characteristics

Both the gerund and the infinitive can function as nouns standing alone, or they can function as verbs in non-finite noun clauses.

1. The gerund and the infinitive can function as nouns, the gerund being more easily identifiable with a noun.

a) The gerund may stand alone as the subject of a verb:

**Reading** is his favourite pastime.

The infinitive is not often used in this way.

b) Both the gerund and the infinitive may stand alone as the object of a verb:

I have finished **working**.

I want **to leave**.

c) Both may function as the complement of *to be*:

My worst vice is **peeping** through the keyhole.

Her { first thought was **to kill** him.

d) Only the gerund can be used as the object of a preposition:

He { insisted **on coming**.

Only { the gerund may be qualified by adjectives:

{ This horse saddle makes **easy riding**.

Only the gerund can be used with an article and can have a plural form:

All the newspapers have now published **the findings** of the police.

I am not accustomed to **his comings and goings**.

2. The gerund and the infinitive can operate as verbs in non-finite noun clauses.

a) They may be followed by a direct or indirect object:

*Closing the factory means laying off more people than expected.* (Direct object)

*He hates speaking to his former friends.* (Indirect object)

b) They may be qualified by adverbs:

*A teacher of English should avoid speaking too quickly.*

*He wants to leave immediately.*

c) They have perfect and passive forms:

Perfect:      *The clerk was accused of having cooked the books.*  
                        *He pretended to have misunderstood the request.*

Passive:      *No one likes being thought a fool.*  
                        *She doesn't want to be told about the accident*

Perfect    *He resented having been told to drop dead.*  
passive:              *He claimed to have been stolen at the Customs.*

3. In some of the above examples a *that*-clause could be used after the main verb in place of the gerund or the infinitive:

a. *Closing the factory means - laying off people.*

- *that people will lose their jobs.*

b. *He pretended - to have misunderstood the request.*

- *that he had misunderstood the request.*

One of the main problems is that of learning which form, *-ing* form, infinitive or *that*-clause, should be used after another verb. One can learn to associate a verb with its particular pattern only through practice. Verbs that are similar in meaning do not necessarily follow the same pattern:

*I advised him to start in the morning.*

*I suggested that he (should) start in the morning.*

### •The Infinitive

Forms of the infinitive:

	<b>Active</b>	<b>Passive</b>
<b>Present infinitive</b>	<i>(to) ask</i>	<i>(to) be asked</i>
<b>Present progressive infinitive</b>	<i>(to) be asking</i>	-
<b>Perfect (past) infinitive</b>	<i>(to) have asked</i>	<i>(to) have been asked</i>
<b>Perfect (past) progressive infinitive</b>	<i>(to) have been asked</i>	-

### The short infinitive

1. The short infinitive is mainly used after modal verbs (except *ought*), including *need* and *dare* when they are modals.

*I can/could/must [...] study harder.*

2. *Let* + infinitive. We use the imperative form *Let's* as an auxiliary verb followed by a short infinitive when making suggestions for actions that include the speaker. *Let's* is often associated with *shall we?*

***Let's have a drink, shall we?***

The negative of *Let's* in suggestions is:

**Let's not/Don't let's** walk home.

Informally, *Let's* can relate to *I* in offers and requests:

**Let's see** what you've got here. **Let's have** a look. ('Can I?')

*Let* as an auxiliary can be followed by other pronouns or even nouns:

**Let** the children/ them **play** in the garden.

3. *Make* ('compel') + short infinitive. *Make* + noun/pronoun object can be followed by a short infinitive meaning 'cause to':

*He made his students learn harder through new methods of teaching.*

*The cut of your suit makes you look slimmer.*

In the passive *make* in this sense is followed by *to*:

*They were made to tell the truth.*

*Make* with the meaning of 'compel' can never be followed by a passive infinitive.

Otherwise it can:

*Rules were made (created) to be broken by the most powerful.*

4. The short infinitive occurs in a number of fixed verbal phrases with *let* and *make*: *let fall*, *let go*, *let me see*, *let slip*, *live and let live*, *make believe*, *make do*.

5. We use the short infinitive after expressions in which 'd can be replaced by *would* or *had*:

a. 'd = would: 'd rather, 'd sooner;

I'd rather stay at home than go out.

b. 'd = had; 'd better, 'd best (less common):

We'd better/best be going.

Informally *better* or subject + *better* often occur without *had*:

*You better stop arguing and get down to work.*

### The infinitive with or without to

1. Help + short infinitive. We may use both infinitives after a few verbs like *help* and *know*. The use of a *to*-infinitive is more formal:

*He helped me (to) repair my car.*

We do not usually omit *to* after *not*:

*How can a teacher help student not to fail the exams?*

In the passive *to* is obligatory after *help*:

*She was helped to solve the problem in half the time.* *Help + passive infinitive* is possible, though rare:

*The chemist was sure that drug will help him to be cured.*

2. *Know + infinitive* normally requires a noun or pronoun object. The omission of *to* is only possible with the perfect form of *know*:

*I've never known her not (**to**) **be frightened** of something.* In the passive *to* is obligatory:

*She was known to have published two collections of poems.*

Infinitives can be joined by *and, but, except, or* and *than*. *To* is usually dropped before the second infinitive:

*I'd like **to go** and **see** the new exhibition.*

#### The short infinitive and -ing forms after verbs of perception

1. Verbs like *hear, smell* and *watch* without a noun or pronoun object followed by an *-ing* form show that the action is perceived in a general way, the *-ing* form functioning as the object of the verb:

*We could **hear screaming** in the haunted house.*

2. Some verbs like *feel, hear, listen to, look at, notice, observe, perceive, see, smell, watch*, can be followed by a noun or pronoun object + short infinitive or *-ing* forms. The infinitive generally shows a complete action, while the *-ing* form refers to the action in progress:

*I saw him **cross** the street* (from one side to the other).

*I saw him **crossing** the street* (he was doing that when I looked, but I do not know if he got to the other side). Both verbal forms can describe a short action:

*I heard him **knock/knocking** on the door.*

We do not usually use *-ing* forms for very short actions:

*I heard him **sneeze**.*

The passive *-ing* form, but not the passive infinitive can follow a verb of perception:

*I saw him **being taken** away by the flood.*

3. The verbs *hear, observe, perceive* and *see* are often used in the passive followed by *-ing* forms or by a *to-infinitive*:

*They were seen **waiting** in the queue* (action in progress).

*They were seen **to climb** through the window.*

#### Have + short infinitive or -ing form

1. *Have + personal object + short infinitive* shows that one person is causing another to do something:

*Have the next client **come in**, please!*

*He wanted a job to do, so I had him **chop** the wood.*

2. *Have + object + -ing form* is used to refer to the results we are aiming at:

*I'll have you **winning** the championship.*

We can also refer to consequences, which may not be intended:

*Don't scream or you'll have the neighbours complaining.*

When we use this construction with *won't* or *can't* we refer to circumstances we are not willing to approve of:

*I won't/can't have you **speaking** like that about my fiancée.*

Sometimes this construction refers to happenings which the speaker cannot control:

*We **have** strong winds and heavy rain **devastating** the region once in fifteen years.*

### The to-infinitive

1. *To/in order to/so as to* express purpose:

*She went to Harrods **to buy** a new dress.*

*Not to* can be used to refer to alternatives:

*She went to Harrods **not to buy** a dress but **to meet** Tom.* We express negative purpose with *so as not to/in order not to:*

*I shut the window **so as not to hear** the noise from the street.*

When there is a change of subject we may use *for... + infinitive*:

*He bought another car (**in order**) **for** his son **to learn** to drive.*

Other verbs such as *bring, buy, need, take, use, want* often introduce an object + *to-infinitive*, which tells us about the purpose of the object, usually an indefinite pronoun:

*I'd like something **to cheer** me up.*

Other verbs, such as *apply, arrange, ask, call, plan, plead, phone, pray, ring, send, vote, wait, wish*, can be followed by *for + object + to-infinitive*. *For* marks the subject of the infinitive:

*How long have you been waiting **for** Tom **to confess** his guilt?*

2. Sometimes the *to-infinitive* in the second part of a sentence is used for the later event in a sequence. The *to-infinitive*, sometimes replaced by *and + verb*, describes an event which is unexpected, or unwelcome - especially when *only* is used in front of *to*:

*We came home after our holiday (**only**) **to find** our house broken into and all the jewels stolen.*

A similar construction occurs with *never*:

*She left home **never to return/never to be seen** again.*

3. The *to-infinitive* is used to refer to the future or to an imaginary past with verbs like: *hope, intend, mean, (would) like to*. A perfect infinitive is often used after a past verb, but it is not always necessary:

*I would like **to see** that play (now, or in the future).*

*I would like **to have seen** it (in the past).*

*I would have liked **to see** it (but I didn't have a chance).*

*I would have liked **to have seen** it.*

### Contrastive negatives

We form the negative of a *to-infinitive* by putting *not* before *to* (in AmE it is placed after *to*):

*He soon learnt **not to speak** rudely to anybody.*

With many verbs such as, *advise, ask, instruct, remind, tell, warn*, the placing of the negative influences the meaning:

*Don't ask Tom **to telephone**, I'll ring him myself.*

*Ask Tom **not to telephone**, I don't want to be disturbed.* The placing of the negative has a similar effect on meaning with adjectives and nouns + infinitive:

*I wasn't sorry to go ('I went').*

*I was sorry not to go ('I didn't go').*

*It wasn't a surprise to hear from Susan ('I heard from her').*

*It was a surprise not to hear from Susan (I didn't hear from her).*

Negatives are sometimes possible in both parts of the sentence:

*I can't promise **not to be** late, but this would be expressed more simply:*

*I can't promise **to be** on time.*

### The split infinitive

To split an infinitive means to place an adverb or *please* between *to* and the verb. This is not a usual procedure in written English but it is met in spoken language, depending on the place of the emphasis.

*He wanted me **to clearly understand** the rules of the game.*

Adverbs like *completely, fully, really, truly* are often used in this way and sometimes there is no other suitable place for them:

*The church wants its believers **to truly confess** their sins.*

### Verbs followed by infinitive

Some verbs followed by *to-infinitive* are *aim, apply, decline, fail, hasten, hesitate, hurry, long, manage, offer, prepare, refuse, seek, shudder, strive, struggle, can't afford*.

Some verbs can be used with or without a noun or pronoun before a *to-infinitive*: *ask, beg, choose, expect, hate, help, intend, like, love, need, prefer, prepare, promise, want, wish*:

*I want **to read** the letter*

compared to

*I want you **to read** the letter.*

Some verbs are normally followed by a pronoun or noun when used with a *to*-infinitive: *advise, allow, assist, bribe, cause, caution, challenge, charge, command, compel, condemn, dare* (meaning 'challenge'), *defy, direct, drive* (meaning 'compel'), *enable, encourage, entitle, forbid, force, impel, implore, incite, induce, instruct, invite, oblige, order, permit, persuade, press* (meaning 'urge'), *recommend, remind, request, teach, tell, tempt, urge, warn*.

*The judge ordered him **to bring** in the prisoner.*

Some verbs can be followed by an object + *to be* and by a few state verbs like: *acknowledge, assume, believe, calculate, consider, declare, discover, estimate, fancy, feel, find, guess, judge, know, maintain, proclaim, prove, reckon, see, show, suppose, take*, (meaning 'presume'), *think, understand*.

*The authorities declared him (**to be**)'persona non grata'.*

*Agatha is thought **to have spread** the rumour in town.*

*Tom is believed **to be going** to Australia for the Olympic Games this year.*

These verbs are very frequently used in the passive and can be followed by passive infinitive:

*The goods are thought **to have been delivered** on time.*

A few verbs like *believe, expect, intend, like, love, mean, prefer, understand, want, wish*, can be followed by *there to be*:

*The Prime Minister expects **there to be** street riots after the tax raise.*

Many verbs can be followed directly by a *to*-infinitive or a *that*-clause: *agree, arrange, beg, (not) care, choose, claim, contrive, decide, demand, determine, expect, hope, intend, learn, plan, prefer, pretend, promise, resolve, swear, threaten, wish*.

*I chose **to go** there in my own car/that I would go in my own car.*

Most of these verbs imply future time so that they are not usually followed by the perfect infinitive. Nevertheless, verbs that refer to intentions or hopes can be followed by a perfect infinitive together with the future perfect:

*He hoped **to have finished** by Christmas.*

#### Patterns with adjectives followed by infinitive

1. *She was kind **to let** us know the good news.*

This pattern is used when we are praising or criticising people. The subject of the main verb and of the infinitive is the same and sometimes an adverb expresses the same idea:

*She very kindly told us what we were expected to do.*

Some adjectives used in this way are: *brave, careless* (not careful), *clever, foolish, generous, good, (un)kind, polite, right, wrong, rude, (un)selfish, silly, wicked*.

## 2. *He is eager to please.*

The subject of the main verb, *be, feel, look* and the subject of the infinitive are the same. The use of this pattern implies the speaker's concern for the people's feeling about an action or situation, *I/we* fitting naturally. There is no alternative structure with *It*. Some adjectives used in this pattern are: *afraid, anxious, ashamed, careful* (not careless), *curious, determined, due, eager, fit, free, frightened, glad, keen, prepared, quick, ready, reluctant, slow, sorry, willing*.

*My friend is always prepared to take the bull by the horns.*

*For + noun/pronoun* can be used after a very limited number of adjectives, such as *anxious, determined, eager* and *keen*, referring to situations that have not yet occurred:

*He's anxious for his son to pass the entrance exam.*

A few adjectives referring to possibility or probability can be included here: *bound/certain to, (un)likely to, sure to.*

*He is bound, certain/likely/sure to win the first prize.*

*It* can be used as a preparatory or empty subject:

*It's bound/sure to rain on our trip to the mountains.*

## 3. *He is easy to please.*

The infinitive in this pattern usually refers to things done to someone or something. The subject of this pattern is also the subject of the infinitive. The *It* structure is often used:

*It is easy to please him.*

Some adjectives used in this pattern are *agreeable, amusing, boring, difficult, easy, hard, impossible, nice* and others.

## 4. *It is good to be here with you.*

We can find many adjectives that fit in this pattern. The infinitive subject is usually replaced by *It*.

**To accept** their job is out of the question.

*It is out of the question to accept* their job.

*For + noun/pronoun* can occur after many of these adjectives:

*It won't be easy for him to find the perfect wife.*

Some of the adjectives ask for an *-ing* form after them:

*It is hard lecturing* in front of so many students.

A number of adjectives used in this way (e. g. *advisable, important, necessary, vital*) refer to advice, necessity, duty and can be followed by *that ...should*:

*It is important to find the solution to this problem/that we should find...*

## 5. *He is the first to arrive.*

We can use *the first*, *the second*, etc, *the next*, *the last*, and superlative like *the best*, *the most suitable* in this pattern.

### Adjectives patterns with 'too' and 'enough'

**Too** comes before the adjective and has the meaning of 'excessive' or of restriction:

*He isn't clever; he believes everything he's told.*

*He is **too stupid** to think by himself.*

Here the subject of the main verb is also the subject of the infinitive. In other circumstances the subject of the main verb is the object of the infinitive:

*The problem is **too difficult**. I can't solve it.*

*The problem is **too difficult (for me)** to solve.*

Generally *-ed* adjectives have a personal subject + *too* and *-ing* adjectives have an impersonal subject + *too*:

*I'm **too bored** to listen to your silly jokes.*

*The race was **too exciting** to watch.*

*Enough* comes after the adjective and means 'to the necessary degree'. In patterns with *to-infinitive* it expresses two ideas:

*He is clever. He can solve the problem.*      *He is clever enough to solve the problem.*

*He is stupid. He can't solve the problem.*      *He isn't clever enough to solve it.*

We have the situation when the subject of the main verb is the object of the infinitive, too:

*The exercise is easy. I can do it. It is easy **enough** (for me) to do.*

*For + noun/pronoun can combine with *too much/little, not enough*:*

*There is **too little work/not enough work** for me to do.*

### Nouns followed by *to-infinitive*

1. In this case the infinitive is related to verbs.

a) Some nouns are usually associated with the infinitive:

*Their decision to go to the capital frightened the President.*

*They decided **to go** to the capital and this frightened the President.*

A noun may have the same form as a verb or a different form:

*They wish to buy a new house.*

*It's their wish to buy a new one.*

*Her bank manager refused to give her a loan.*

*His refusal to give her a loan took her by surprise.*

b) Some nouns are followed by a preposition + -ing form.

*He can't hope to make friends with her.*

*There's no hope of making friends with her.*

Some nouns can be followed by an infinitive or by a preposition:

*It's a pleasure to **study** English.*

*There is nothing better than the pleasure of **studying** English.*

c) Some nouns combine with other infinitive forms: *a surprise to be/to have been; a change to be sitting/lying on the beach*, etc.

2. There are instances where the *to*-infinitive is related to the nouns it follows.

Many of these adjectives have equivalent nouns (usually having different forms). But not all these nouns can be followed by *to*-infinitives:

*She's determined/eager/willing to **accept** the offer.*

*Due to her determination/eagerness/willingness to **accept** the offer we can finish the job.*

But we have noun + preposition + -ing form:

*It was generous/kind (of you) to **lend** us the money we need.*

*Thank you for your generosity/kindness in **lending** us the money.*

3. The *to*-infinitive is often used after a noun to convey advice, purpose etc. This construction has the role of a relative clause:

*The best person to **help** you is your father (that can help you).*

Sometimes active and passive infinitives are interchangeable:

*There is something to do/to be done about that matter.* When the subject is the same for the sentence and the infinitive we do not normally use the passive:

*He has homework to do.*

4. The *to*-infinitive can be used after words used in place of nouns, such as *something, someone, a lot*:

*There was a lot to read/to be read for the exam,*

or they can have different meanings:

*There was nothing to do in the evenings so we watched TV (we were bored).*

*He's already in prison. There is nothing to be done about his bail (we can't change it).*

5. We also have the constructions *so...as to* and *such a/an...as to*:

*I'm not so stupid as to **tell** you where the money is.*

*I'm not such a fool as to **tell** you where the money is.*

We use the *to*-infinitive after a noun preceded by an adjective in exclamations, sometimes the adjective being omitted when criticising:

*What a rude thing to say.*

## •The -ing form

1. After verbs. Verbs like *enjoy*, *deny* can be followed directly by the *-ing* form:

- Active: *He denies coming here in his own car.*
- Passive: *They resented being accused.*
- Active: *He denied having come here in his own car.*
- Passive: *They resented having been accused.*

When we want to use another verb immediately after the verbs in the following list, it can only be in an *-ing* form, never a *to-infinitive*: *admit*, *appreciate*, *avoid*, *celebrate*, *consider*, *contemplate*, *defer*, *delay*, *deny*, *detest*, *discontinue*, *dislike*, *dispute*, *endure*, *enjoy*, *it entails*, *escape*, *excuse*, *explain*, *fancy*, *feel*, *like*, *finish*, *forgive*, *can't help*, *hinder*, *imagine*, *it involves*, *keep*, *loathe*, *it means*, *mention*, *mind* ('object to'), *miss*, *it necessitates*, *pardon*, *postpone*, *practice*, *prevent*, *recall*, *report*, *resent*, *resist*, *risk*, *suggest*, *understand*:

*The convicts escaped being caught.*

*Deny* and *regret* are often followed by perfect participle:

*Children usually deny having done anything wrong.*

The *-ing* form relating to outdoor activities, such as *climbing*, *driving*, *fishing*, *riding*, *sailing*, *shopping*, *skiing*, *walking*, *water-skiing*, *wind-surfing*, is often used after *go* and *come* when we are

a) making suggestions:

*Why don't we go fishing on such a lovely day?*

b) inviting:

*Come shopping this afternoon if you feel like.*

c) narrating:

*Last week we went sightseeing in Edinburgh.*

The *-ing* form can follow *need*, *want* and seldom *require* having a passive meaning:

*She needs cheering up (to be cheered up).*

With some of the verbs which can be followed by an *-ing* form, we can put another word between the verb and the *-ing* form. Sometimes this word must be an accusative, sometimes a possessive or either. After the following verbs the *-ing* form functions as a participle and we can include an accusative: *hear*, *keep*, *smell*, *start*, *stop*, *watch*.

*When are you going to start working?*

*When are you going to start him working?*

The following verbs must always have an accusative: *catch*, *find*, *leave*, *notice*, *observe*, *perceive*, *see*.

*I saw him **pickpocketting** in the station.*

Verbs of perception (*hear, see*) can also be followed by an object + short infinitive:

*He saw his wife get on the train with another man.*

The following verbs can be followed by the *-ing* form alone or by a possessive. Here the *-ing* form functions as a gerund, so we can use a possessive form, referring to people and to things, in front of: *appreciate, avoid, consider, defer, delay, deny, enjoy, postpone, risk, suggest*.

*I don't enjoy their coming late to the office.*

Some verbs can be followed by *-ing* alone or by an accusative or a possessive before *-ing*: *anticipate, contemplate, detest, dislike, dispute, endure, escape, excuse, (can't) face, fancy, forgive, hate, hinder, imagine, it involves, like, love, mention, mind ('object to'), miss, it necessitates, pardon, prevent, resent, resist, understand, can't bear, can't help, can't stand*. In speech the accusative is generally preferred:

*I can't imagine him/his climbing the Everest.*

2. After adjectives and nouns. Like the *to*-infinitive, the *-ing* form can be used as the subject of a sentence and can be replaced by a construction with 'preparatory' *it*. There is not much difference in meaning between *-ing* and the *to*-infinitive. The *-ing* form may refer to an action in progress, while the *to*-infinitive may refer to general:

*It's difficult **thinking** in a foreign language.*

*It's difficult **to think** in a foreign language.*

We rarely begin statements with *to*-infinitive but often begin with *-ing* forms, especially when we make general statements:

***Travelling** around the world is interesting.*

Adjectives can be followed by the accusative or the possessive:

*It's strange him/his talking so loudly.*

When the *-ing* form begins a sentence it is normally preceded only by a possessive:

*His working on the computer all day long gets on his family's nerves.*

Many nouns, both countable and uncountable, can be followed by the *-ing* form after 'preparatory' *it*, e.g.: *a catastrophe, a disaster, fun, hell, luck, a mistake, a pain, a pleasure, a relief, a tragedy*.

*It's a nightmare going in his old car.*

Typical expression that can be followed by the *-ing* form are: *it's no good, it's no use, it's little use, it's hardly any use, it's not worth, it's scarcely/hardly worth, it's worthwhile, spend money/time, there's no, there's no point in, there's nothing worse than, what's the use/point*.

3. After prepositions. Prepositions can be followed by all -ing forms, active and passive, e. g.: *without signing your real name; without being called; without having been warned*. We may use the -ing form after prepositions such as: *about, after, by, for, instead of, to, without*:

*Why shouldn't we try to leave the restaurant without paying?*

Prepositions can also be followed by an accusative pronoun, noun, or possessive:

*He would come without our inviting him.*

*There is/There will be and it is/it will be* can be replaced by *there being* and *it being* after prepositions. *There being* can often be omitted:

*Is there any chance of (there being) an increase in salary this year?*

Many adjectives can be followed by prepositions like *afraid of, bored with, fond of, good at, happy about, interested in, keen on, sorry for, used to*. The -ing form (not a to-infinitive) may be used after them:

*He was surprised at their not calling at all.*

The -ing form may be used after noun + preposition such as *concern about, fear of, interest in*:

*Sue could never overcome her fear of being robbed.* Accusative and possessive forms can also be used.

*Your main concern must be about his passing his exams.* Many verbs are followed by prepositions: *apologise for, approve of, insist on, prevent somebody/something from, thank somebody for.* The -ing form may be used after a verb + preposition and may be preceded by an object or a possessive:

*I must insist on you/your coming on time.*

*To* is either a preposition or a part of the infinitive. It is part of the infinitive in:

*He wants **to become** a doctor,*

but a preposition governing a noun/gerund in,

*I object **to** intruders.*

*I object **to** smoking indoors.*

In the following expressions *to* is a preposition, so we may use the -ing form after it: *accustom (oneself) to, be accustomed to, face up to, in addition to, look forward to, object to, reduced to, resign oneself to, be resigned to, resort to, sink to, be used to.* Accusative and possessive forms are possible, too:

*I am used to people/him/her **throwing** trash all over the place.*

Some nouns and adjectives can also be followed by *to + -ing*: *alternative to, close/closeness to, dedication/dedicated to, opposition/opposed to, similarity/similar to.*

Some verbs can be followed by a *to-infinitive* or by *-ing* forms. These verbs can be followed by both without any change in meaning: *attempt, begin, can't bear, cease, commence, continue, intend, omit, start*.

*I began reading/to read the book after the newsreel.*

We do not normally use *-ing* after the progressive forms of *begin, cease, continue, start*. But we can use *-ing* after the progressive form of the verbs which cannot be followed by a *to-infinitive*:

*We were considering moving to another town.*

State verbs like *know* and *understand* cannot normally be used with an *-ing* form after *begin, cease, continue*:

*He began to understand what was going on.*

We often use a *to-infinitive* after *dread, hate, like, love, prefer* to refer to a specified future event and *-ing* to refer to an activity currently in progress or existing in general:

*I dread to think of what has happened ('I dare not try to').*

*I dread going to the dentist ('whenever I go I'm terrified').*

The *to-infinitive* and *-ing* forms never mean the same when used after *remember, forget, regret, try, stop, go on*. *Remember, forget, regret + to-infinitive* refers to a present or future action:

*I never forgot to post the letters.*

The same verbs + *-ing* forms refer to the past:

*I remembered telling him the news last night.*

*Try + to-infinitive* means 'make an effort'. *Try + -ing* means experiment.

*Try to behave yourself.*

*Try talking to her in person.*

*Stop + to-infinitive* refers to purpose.

The *-ing* form that follows *stop* is the object of the verb and means that the action is not performed anymore.

*He stopped in the middle of the road to light his cigarette.*

*He stopped reading when she came in.*

*Go on + to-infinitive* refers to doing something different. *Go on + -ing* means 'continue without interruption'.

*He went on to talk about the next issue.*

*He went on talking about his love affairs until everybody was bored to death.*

## EXERCISES

### 29. Complete the following sentences with the gerund or the infinitive of the verbs in brackets.

1. The chairperson suggested to the committee that all the money should be devoted to ..*supporting*.. (support) shelters for old people.
2. Expensive presents are the key to (open) her heart.
3. The president felt committed to (try) to (put) his promises into practice.
4. His becoming a specialist in dermal diseases is nearer to (become) a reality after the course he has attended.
5. Although she is confident on her opinion, she can't swear to (have) seen the whole scene.
6. He got used to (be) thoroughly searched at the Customs due to his Creole complexion.
7. Jane came very close to (win) the first prize in the chess competition.
8. It might be better to (try) to (talk) to your son as man to man.
9. They used to (hate) their noisy neighbours but now they resigned to (put) up with them.
10. Breaking one's word is the most important obstacle to (make) a true friend.

### 30. Put the verbs in brackets into their correct form.

1. He had to ask the children ...*to stop*..(stop) (make) so much noise.
2. They can't consider (emigrate) before (pay) back all their debts.
3. If you can't (recover) with chemical drugs, try (use) homeopathic remedies.
4. I don't want (you, tell) him about (I, arrive) late last night.
5. I can't understand (Jane, crave) for sweets, as she has tried (lose) weight so many times.
6. He's always loved (skate). I'd like (see) (he, compete) in the World Championship.
7. The headmaster let the teachers (go) on a trip with their students.
8. After (get) (like) classical music through (hear) it on CDs, he finished by (collect) old records.
9. Can you manage (finish) (dig) the garden without any help?
10. I saw her (write) a letter to her boyfriend and then heard her (read) it aloud.

### 31. Complete the following sentences with the verbs from the list in their correct form.

*play, give, buy, say, fly, become, drink, be eaten, study, confess, know, take.*

1. She is afraid of ...*flying*...so she went there by boat.
2. She walked out of the room without even ...*goodbye*.
3. My new neighbour spends all the afternoons ...*the piano*.
4. I went to the bookshop ...*the new novel written by John Fowles*.
5. She didn't mind ...*him a lift to the office*.
6. He stopped ...as he didn't want ... *addicted*.
7. They made him ...*everything about the theft*.
8. You had better ...*hard if you want ...all your exams in the winter session*.
9. The steak is not done yet ...
10. I think ...*a foreign language makes you richer*.

**32. Finish the following sentences without changing the meaning of the sentences printed before them.**

1. He is too absent-minded to hear what you're saying.  
He isn't *attentive enough to hear what you're saying*.
2. He can't remember switching off the light before leaving.  
He has .....
3. It took him five hours to get to that remote village.  
He spent .....
4. Do you intend to go in for the competition?  
Are you.....
5. I'm not in the habit of gossiping, so please spare me with all this rumour.  
I'm not used.....
6. He was able to solve that difficult problem.  
He was .....
7. It was difficult for them to talk with natives, as they didn't know the language too well.  
They had .....
8. Could you buy me a loaf if you go out?  
Would you .....
9. It isn't worth going there after so much rain.  
It's a .....
10. I don't intend to go there without being told why.  
I have.....